**6b Page 72 AUDIOSCRIPT**

Upper Intermediate Student’s Book

Life

1.37

**P = Presenter; K = Katie Samuel**

**P**: … Now, have you ever thought of doing a bit of building work during your holidays? Or helping to look after animals on a wildlife reserve? You probably thought that sort of vacation was for eighteen year olds on their gap year, didn’t you? But it seems more and more working adults are opting for volunteer vacations. With us today is Katie Samuel, author of *Good Travel*, a guide to alternative holidays. Katie, I can see that this might attract a few people, but for most of us, who only get a few weeks off a year … wouldn’t they prefer a more relaxing option?

**K:** Well, that depends very much on how your volunteer vacation is organised. The good companies in this field are certainly conscious of the fact that this should be a rewarding travel experience … and not just a work trip.

**P:** But isn’t the whole point of it to go and lend a hand to people in need of help? It’s not really a holiday as we know it, is it?

**K:** Well, no, perhaps it isn’t, but it is more like what real travel should be about: a cultural experience where each side gives something and takes something. A good example is a programme next to Kenya’s Tsavo National Park, where volunteers help local people to find ways of making a living that don’t involve poaching or killing local wildlife. So they help them to plant crops, build fences, develop ideas for tourist businesses and so on. In return the locals take them for bush walks, which are like mini-safaris, teach them about local wildlife, talk about the history of their community …

**P:** But the volunteers pay for the trip, don’t they?

**K:** Yes, of course, they have to pay for their airfares, their living expenses and something to cover the organisation costs.

**P:** And do you need to be qualified to volunteer? I imagine organisations don’t want people turning up to teach or build or whatever who have no idea of what they’re doing, do they?

Life

**K:** Again it depends … There are a few projects which are only open to people with professional experience … um … like people with a medical background … but for the most part, volunteers can be trained to do the work. The Cultural Restoration Tourism Project (CRTP), which helps to restore cultural heritage sites around the world, gives volunteers the chance to work with local architects and artists. They have a project restoring a 300-year-old monastery in Nepal where you can get training in doing wall paintings from a world-famous painter.

**P:** So, you could actually come back with a skill you didn’t have when you left?

**K:** Absolutely. It might not be a skill you’ll ever use again: helping to bottle-feed milk to orphaned lion cubs – that’s a project in Zambia – is unlikely to be of direct use to you back at the office in the UK, but we all benefit from new and different experiences, wouldn’t you agree?

**P:** Yeah, I’m sure that’s true. So could you tell us a bit more about …